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MAGAZINE

OF

AMERICAN HISTORY

ILLUSTRATED.

EDITED BY MRS. MARTHA J. LAMB.



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THE MAGAZINE OF AMERICAN HISTORY.

Vol. XIX.

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Eng. by A. Phelps

Amos A. Phelps

(1797—1882)

MAGAZINE OF AMERICAN HISTORY

VOL. XIX

JANUARY, 1888

No. 1

THURLOW WEED'S HOME IN NEW YORK CITY

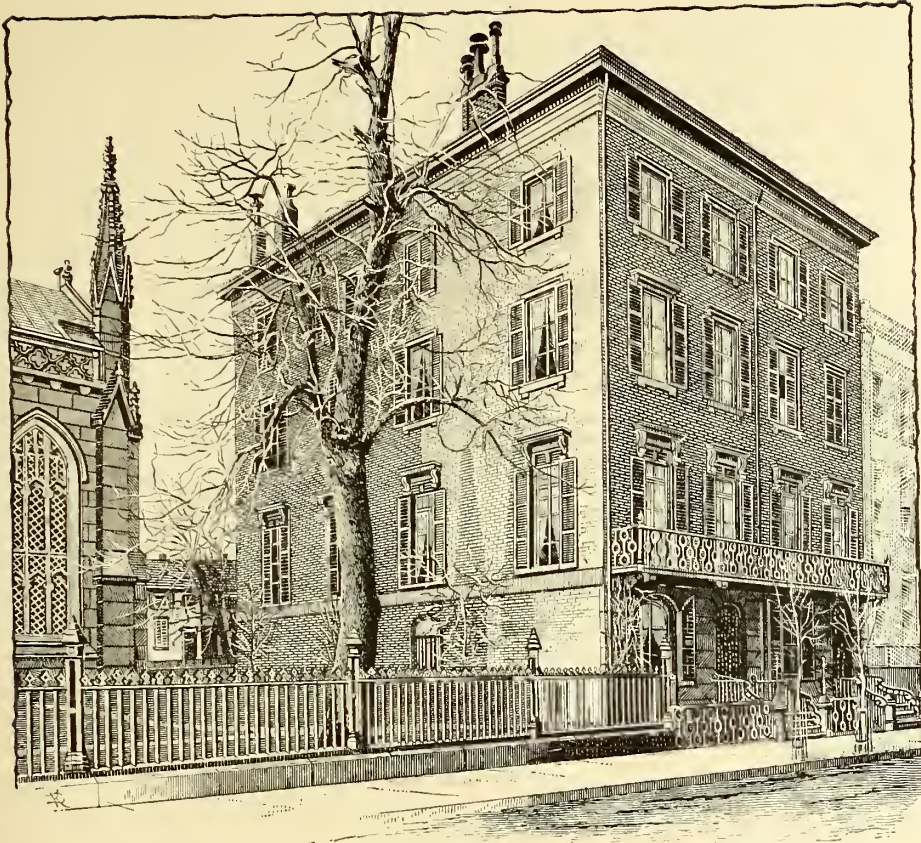
THERE is nothing in the exterior of the substantial and commodious mansion occupied by Thurlow Weed during the last seventeen years of his life to arrest special attention. Architecturally, it is an English basement of the stereotyped city pattern, to the casual observer lofty and slim, yet quite unlike its immediate neighbors with their northern frontage in Twelfth Street, as, standing next the grounds of the First Presbyterian Church, it has a broad, sunny eastern side, studded with a dozen windows overlooking Fifth Avenue through the branches of a magnificent tree. Ivy clings to the stone of this exposed wall, particularly about the window of Mr. Weed's study, and is the familiar resort of countless sweet-voiced birds, while near the dining-room window is a flourishing willow brought originally from the vicinity of Napoleon's grave at St. Helena. Through the leafy gap between the corners of the house and the church may be seen, in the rear yard, some of the veritable trees that bordered the old Bloomingdale road in this locality nearly a century ago; and about them are bright-colored flowers in their seasons, with the jasmine, honeysuckle, cypress, and other vines reaching about for supports, and an artistically trained wistaria covering, in one solid mass of beautiful foliage, the whole southern end of the house to its very roof.

The interior of the dwelling—where the chief interest centres—is roomy and inexpressibly cheery and radiant with the spirit of domestic life. It is preserved in precisely the same condition as that in which it was left by Mr. Weed, and reflects with peculiar emphasis the native genius and remarkable force of character of the man who has gone into history as one of the ablest editors and most astute politicians this country has ever known.

When Thurlow Weed was born, in 1797, Washington was living, John Adams was President of the United States, and our Constitution was but ten years old. He saw the first steamboat on its way up the Hudson to Albany in 1807; he served in the war of 1812; and had been a journeyman printer, then an editor, and had become a married man before there

was any Erie Canal except in prospect. He was one of the two editors who, by appointment, accompanied Lafayette on his northern tour in 1824, the other being Colonel William L. Stone. He was one of the party, in 1832, who occupied the first train of cars that passed over the first passenger railroad in the state of New York—between Albany and Schenectady—a picture of which may be seen in our illustration of the entrance hall, hanging upon the wall near the library door. Among his companions on this experimental trip were Robert Lansing, ex-Governor Yates, Lewis Benedict, John Meigs, John I. Boyd, Joseph Alexander, Hugh Robinson, and a post-boy named Billy Winne. Mr. Weed witnessed the miracles of progress in the next and most wonderful half-century in the world's history. He was himself no inconsequential factor in the rise and development of journalism; he lived and worked with three generations of earnest men, and was personally acquainted with almost every celebrity in the country during his life-time. When he retired from his vigorous career to the repose of private life, he continued to read, talk, and write upon every theme of a political or governmental nature, and was perpetually solicited for advice and aid in the solution of practical problems that defied the wisdom of expert legislators.

He purchased the property in Twelfth Street in February, 1866, from Mr. James Blatchford, then a well-known member of the New York Stock Exchange. The house was built by the son of Rev. Mr. Phillips, pastor of the adjoining church. It was situated pleasantly for Mr. Weed, through the fact that many of his personal friends, with whom he had intimate social relations, resided in the vicinity—General Winfield Scott, a few doors west in Twelfth Street; Mr. Robert C. Minturn, in Fifth Avenue, corner of Twelfth Street (the house now occupied by General Butterfield, nearly opposite Mr. Weed's); James Lenox, in Fifth Avenue, near by; Moses H. Grinnell, at the corner of Fourteenth Street and Fifth Avenue; and Jonathan Sturges, Richard M. Blatchford, and Robert H. McCurdy, in Fourteenth Street, but a few doors from Fifth Avenue. The house adjoining Mr. Weed's on the west was occupied by a son of Harrison Gray Otis, of Boston, whose family still reside in it. Mr. Weed altered his new home to suit his tastes and convenience, and moved into it in March, 1866. His eldest daughter, Miss Harriet Weed, since the death of his wife ten years before, in 1856, had been his constant companion, several times accompanying him to Europe. She was the presiding genius of his household, and bore the whole care of the establishment, with its never-ending procession of visitors—friends and acquaintances, party leaders and office-seekers, lion-hunters and strangers, journalists, statesmen, great men and



THURLOW WEED'S HOME IN TWELFTH STREET, NEW YORK CITY.

small men, lawyers and soldiers, merchants and mechanics, millionaires and beggars. Nearly all the distinguished characters of the country paid their respects to him from time to time, and notable statesmen from across the seas were frequently his guests. He was accessible to every person in distress, and it was rarely that an applicant for alms went away empty-handed. His library never became such an audience chamber as that famous room, No. 11, at the Astor House, where caucuses were held, campaigns arranged, senators, congressmen, cabinet ministers, governors, and Presidents made and unmade, but it approached it in many curious respects. Miss Weed, if not by his side, was always within reach of her father's voice, and ready to relieve him whenever the burden of entertaining callers became oppressive. The very mention of her name recalls a presence always sympathetic and

loving, always cheerful and devoted, always a wise counselor, a confidential friend, a careful protector, a stay and a refuge. She took charge of his extensive correspondence, filing and indexing letters and documents of priceless value; she seemed acquainted with his every thought and desire, and carried out his wishes even before they were expressed. She read to him, and she wrote at his dictation. How nobly, effectually, and tenderly she ministered to his comfort and happiness through the memorable later decades of his life the world has long since known. Mr. Weed's younger daughters, Mrs. Alden and Mrs. Barnes, with their families, were much with him, although their homes were elsewhere. He had six grandchildren, of whom he was excessively fond.

The picturesque figure of Thurlow Weed is more vividly identified with this home in Twelfth Street than with any other place of his abode in previous years. It was a fitting frame for the "Warwick," as he was often styled. His excellent portrait, our frontispiece, represents him as he is best remembered by the present generation—the attitude, the style of dress, the reposeful expression of countenance, are all familiar. This portrait, from a photograph taken from life during the period under consideration, was never before published. Mr. Weed was a tall, large-framed, well-formed man, with snow-white hair in his later years, light blue eyes under shaggy eyebrows, a thoughtful kindly face that had deep lines about the mouth indicating strong will, and genial and engaging manners. In studying his portrait one can readily conceive how he came to be sent across the ocean as a private citizen to set the cause of America right before the civilized world, in 1861. He was calm, quiet, sedate, self-possessed, full of tact, resource, and self-reliance; and whether in the height of his extraordinary political power, or in the restful and happy home of his retirement, he was the cordial, hospitable, unassuming, typical American, with a touch of courtliness in his address. Although somewhat deliberate and careful in his movements, he was a rapid, energetic walker on the street. He was up to the time of his decease applauded whenever he appeared in public, and his opinions were sought on all manner of current topics by men of all shades of political belief. Editors dropped in to take counsel with him, and whenever any great or stirring event occurred, a host of nimble reporters started on the run for Twelfth Street, to see which could first learn what Thurlow Weed had to say about it. His reminiscences and anecdotes of distinguished individuals with whom he had been associated, and his accounts of the historic scenes in which he had participated, commanded the most universal and intense interest at all times and on all occasions. "As an editor, Mr. Weed was never given to ponderous



ENTRANCE HALL TO THURLOW WEED'S HOME.

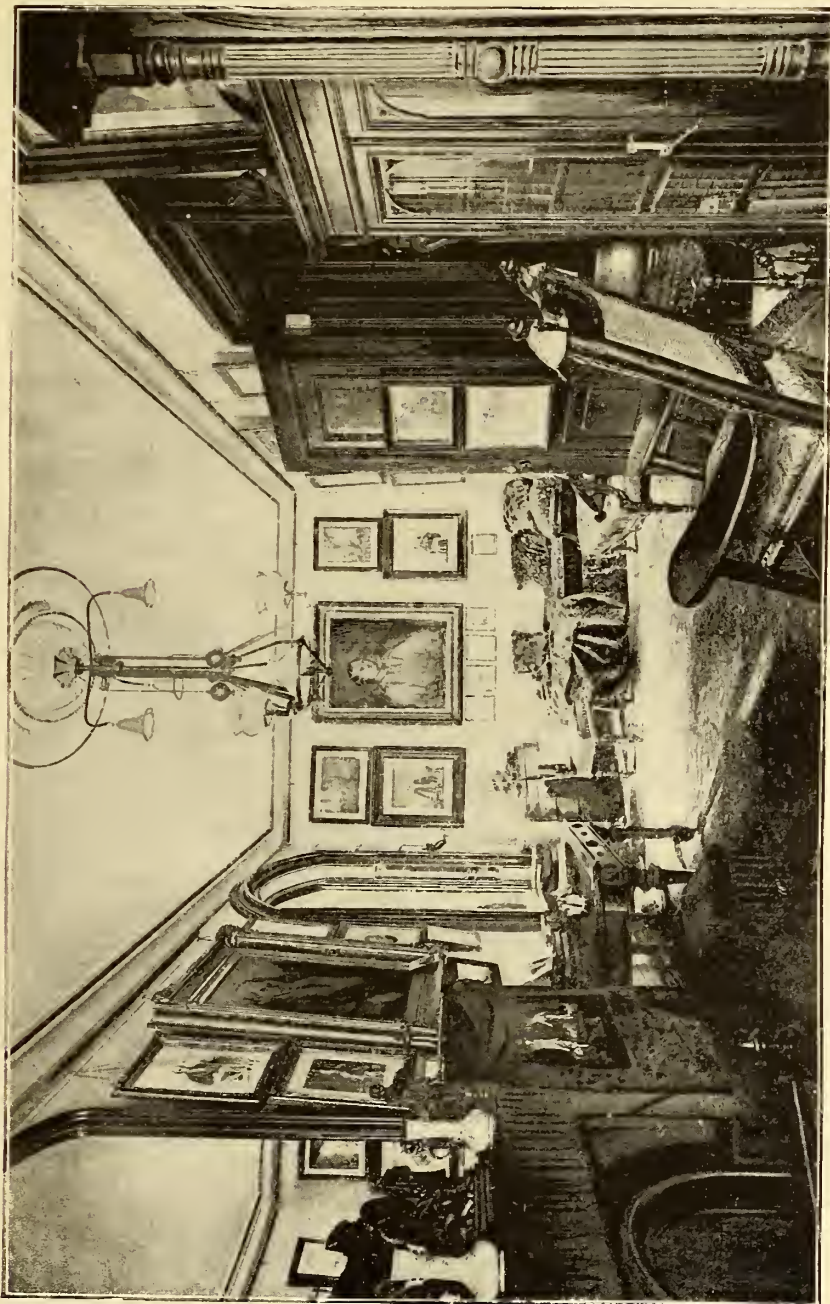
[From a photograph by Miss Catharine Weed Barnes.]

leaders, but found his best weapon in the paragraph. Horace Greeley used to say that he could find fifty men who could spin out column articles with the greatest ease, where he scarcely found one who could write a really clever paragraph. In this style of writing Mr. Weed was perfect, and the light artillery of his caustic pen was more effective in party warfare than the heavy column projectiles of the 'leader' sort. His sarcasm was cutting, and his extraordinary memory left politicians open to attacks on matters they deemed long forgotten. His style was novel forty years ago, and of course all the more attractive and successful. While the Democratic reader was carefully working out the pith of one of his opponent Croswell's dismally long editorials, the Whig reader had stored away forty facts from Mr. Weed's budget of paragraphs." His temperament was admirably adapted to his career. Had he been an office-seeker, he never could have attained that controlling influence in American politics that made him the most influential man of his time. He never would accept an

office. Thus he inspired confidence in the minds of his contemporaries. He was known to be disinterested. His marvelous success, however, as a party manager was due chiefly to his native genius; he understood men, measured them instinctively, and read their motives as easily as he did his hymn-book. And then he had the advantage of rarely forgetting a name, a face, or an incident. In conducting practical politics he seemed invested with the interest and devotion of a general directing an army.

Few city homes have ever been fashioned with a more inviting hall of entrance than Mr. Weed's. It is not only of unusual width for such an edifice, but it is elaborately finished and furnished. On the right, as you enter, are massive book-cases, filled with valuable tomes, and in the corner is an antique clock. The staircase is of a pattern much in vogue in the old baronial country seats of Holland. The walls are hung with the portraits of public men, and with quaint and curious pictures, one of which, as before mentioned, is a sketch of the first train of cars on the first railroad in the state of New York—in which Mr. Weed was a passenger. The spacious parlors are on the second floor, with the family dining-room in their rear; but before we ascend to them let us rest a moment in Mr. Weed's cozy library and reception room.

It is on the left of the entrance hall. Here Mr. Weed was almost always to be found, although the whole house seemed full of him. His writing desk to the left of the open fireplace, his easy chair, his favorite lounge, and suggestive book-cases between the front window and the door, are the principal features of this attractive apartment—unless we include the portraits upon the walls. Archbishop Hughes is represented in a large painting in the centre of the extreme end of the library, on one side of which are the smaller portraits of Lord Thurlow, and Bishop McIlvaine, and on the other those of Bishop Purcell, and Charles Dickens in his study. The life-size portrait of William H. Seward, and one of Mr. Weed himself, hang upon the walls. There are smaller portraits, engravings, or photographs of Henry Clay, Sir Henry Holland, General Scott, De Witt Clinton, Governor Marcy, General Dix, Daniel Webster, George Peabody, Anson Burlingame, William M. Evarts, Hamilton Fish, Horatio Seymour, Preston King, President Taylor, President Arthur, President Lincoln, and many other celebrities. In a frame is a dinner invitation to Mr. Weed from Governor De Witt Clinton in 1825. All these portraits and pictures hang in the same places on the walls as in Mr. Weed's lifetime. The book-cases contain, it is thought, the finest private collection of autograph letters in this country. These letters are chronologically arranged, and well bound in substantial volumes, including the



THURLOW WEED'S LIBRARY AND RECEPTION ROOM.
[From a photograph by Miss Catharine Weed Barnes.]

correspondence of nearly all the men of eminence in politics, religion, charity, science and letters, who have lived and had their day since 1825, together with autograph letters from most of the Presidents of the United States since the time of Madison, and from very many of the statesmen of Great Britain. They are all addressed to Thurlow Weed. The letters of Secretary Seward alone fill several volumes, covering the three or four decades of his public life. Letters of De Witt Clinton, Henry Clay, Daniel Webster, and Horace Greeley, are numerous and characteristic. Such a mass of private history, embracing a period so full of startling events, so racy and sensational, could hardly exist elsewhere. President Lincoln's letters are perhaps the most thrilling and magnetic, so to speak, of any in this unparalleled collection of treasures. He wrote when he had something of the first importance to say, not infrequently in strictest confidence, and expressed himself in the tersest and most direct and forcible manner. One of his letters we present in fac-simile by permission of the family.

How constantly President Lincoln sought Mr. Weed's advice while trying to guide the ship of state through the blinding storms and troubled waters of civil conflict into a safe harbor, was little realized or appreciated at the time. In the beginning of the war Mr. Weed was still the editor-in-chief of the *Albany Evening Journal*, which his genius, industry, tact and courage had founded, and conducted through more than thirty years of advance of journalism into a national power. He was then a little over sixty years of age, with ripe experience in the study of human nature, keen instincts as to popular sentiment, profound knowledge of the country's affairs, and instant sagacity for difficult emergencies. No one more critically comprehended all this than Abraham Lincoln. Mr. Weed was summoned by telegram to Washington so often that it would seem as if no other mind was so variously influential in directing the course of events. He usually made the journey in the night.

One instance, as an illustration. In the winter of 1863, a dispatch late in the afternoon requested Mr. Weed's presence in Washington the next morning. He had but just time to catch the outgoing train, and in the dim dawn of a February morning was pushing swiftly through the streets of the capital to breakfast, as was his habit on these hurried visits, with Secretary Seward at his residence overlooking Lafayette Square. The two then proceeded to the White House, where the President received them with a worried expression on his face. Mr. Lincoln explained in a few words that money was wanted immediately, for war necessities, and there was no appropriation from which it could be legally taken. "How much?" asked Mr. Weed. "Fifteen thousand dollars," said the President. "If

you must have if at once, give me two lines to that effect," said Mr. Weed. President Lincoln turned to his desk and wrote the following:

"MR. WEED: The matters I spoke to you about are important. I hope you will not neglect them. A. LINCOLN."

"The money will be at your disposal to-morrow morning," said Mr. Weed. He then took an abrupt departure, for he must catch the morning return train to New York, and those who saw that striking figure, with firm, elastic step passing swiftly through the gate and springing upon the train while it was already moving out of the station, little dreamed of the significance of

Executive Mansion.

Washington, March 15, 1865

Thurlow Weed, Esq.

My dear Sir,

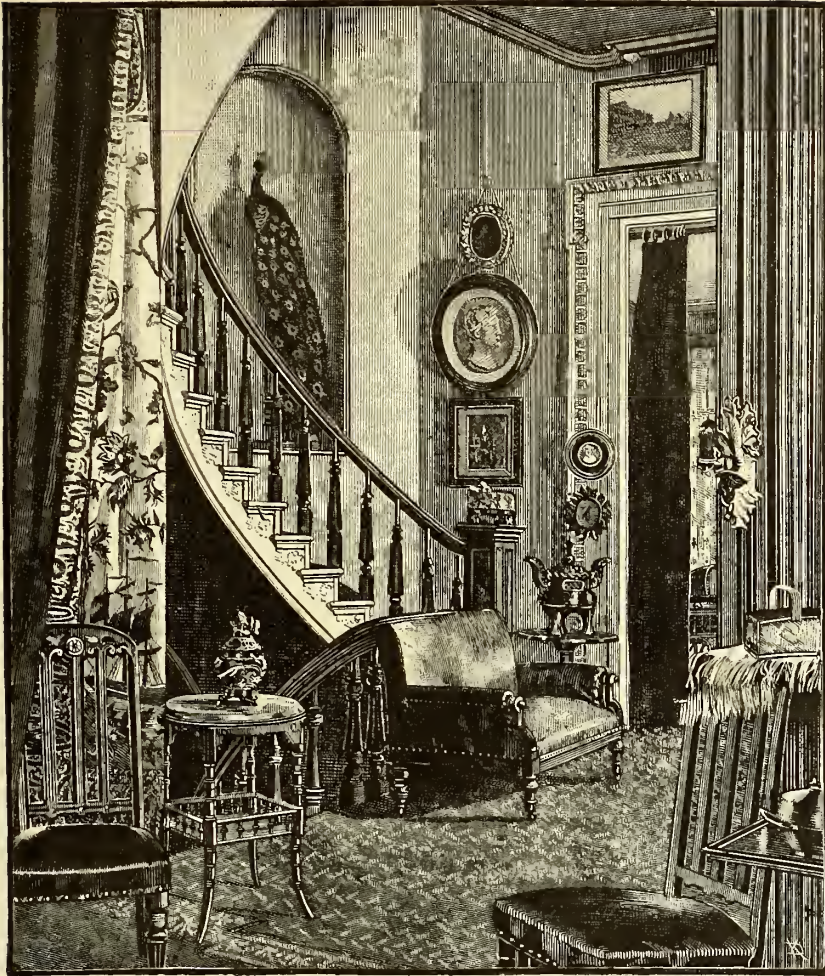
Every one likes a compliment, thank you for yours on my little notification speech, and on the recent Inaugural Address. I expect the latter to wear as well as — perhaps better than — anything I have produced, but I believe it is not immediately popular. Men are not flattered by being shown that there has been a difference of opinion between the Almighty and them. To deny it, however, in this case, is to deny that there is a God governing the world, it is a point which I thought needless to be told, and, as whatever of humiliation there is in it, falls most directly on ^{myself} ~~me~~, I thought others might afford for one to tell it.

Yours truly,

A. Lincoln

the incident. He reached New York before five o'clock in the afternoon, and that same evening fifteen thousand dollars was sent to the President for the important uses of the government. It was contributed by New York merchants and capitalists, of whom were Marshall O. Roberts, Isaac Bell, Alexander T. Stewart, William H. Aspinwall, C. Vanderbilt, Russell Sturges, Charles Knapp, and others.

Prior to this, in the latter part of the autumn of 1861, Mr. Weed had been summoned imperatively to Washington on business of another kind, and the results of that particular wearisome night journey were far-reaching in their results. When, after his breakfast with Mr. Seward, he reached the White House, the chief topic of conversation was the embarrassment of the President in relation to the appointment of commissioners to proceed immediately to Europe for the purpose of correcting the erroneous impressions about the Civil War then in progress. Confederate agents were already abroad, and others were about to go, eliciting, as far as they could, the sympathy of foreign powers. There were ominous rumblings and covert threats: there were prospects that were unpleasant to contemplate. War with England, or with any of the nations of the civilized world, must be avoided if expert statesmanship and astute diplomacy could achieve such a victory. Our readers all know by heart the magnitude of the dangers at that crisis. Four gentlemen had already been appointed to this commission—Edward Everett, of Boston; Archbishop Hughes, of New York; J. R. Kennedy, of Baltimore; and Bishop McIlvaine, of Ohio, to go abroad without compensation, their expenses only to be paid. But Mr. Everett had declined, on the ground that having previously been minister to England it seemed improper for him to go again to that country in a subordinate capacity; and Mr. Kennedy had declined because of imperative business engagements. Mr. Seward requested Mr. Weed to suggest two suitable persons to fill the vacancies, and he named Robert C. Winthrop, of Boston, and Thomas Ewing, of Ohio. Neither of those gentlemen, however, could be prevailed upon to accept the delicate and important mission. Archbishop Hughes was urged to accept, as it was thought he might undo the work of the Bishop of Charleston who had confused the mind of the Pope; but he was not in perfect health, and in a matter of such moment would only consent to the appointment on condition that Thurlow Weed would go with him as his colleague. This proposition Mr. Weed at first emphatically declined, but the strongest arguments were brought to bear upon the great politician, and he reluctantly assented. The three commissioners—Bishop McIlvaine having accepted—were duly appointed a few days before the exploit of Commodore Wilkes, and they sailed, Mr. Weed ac-



RECEPTION HALL OR MIDDLE PARLOR OF THURLOW WEED'S HOME.

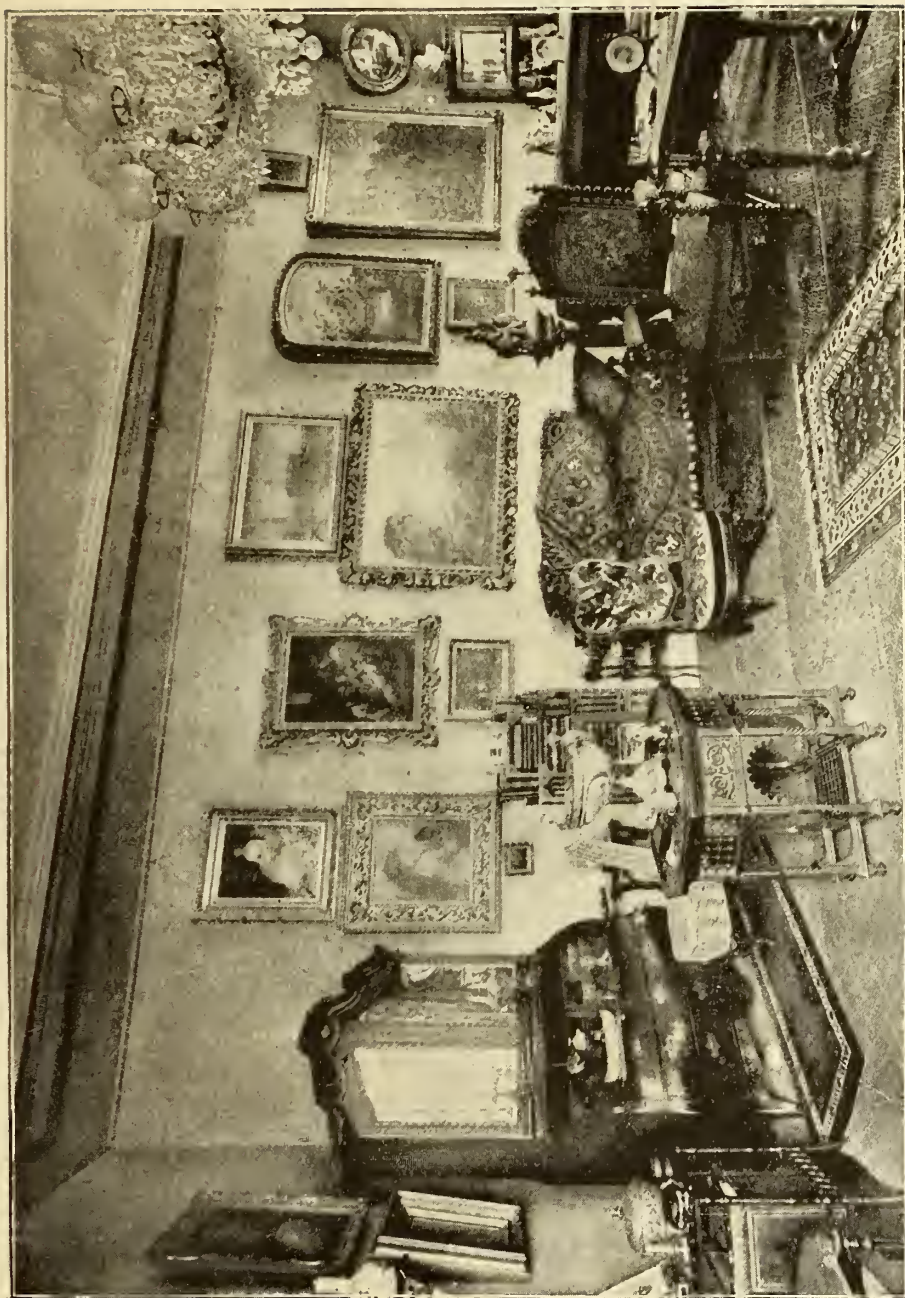
[From a photograph by Miss Catharine Weed Barnes.]

accompanied by his daughter, Miss Harriet Weed, about the same time that Mason and Slidell were captured.

A cyclone of momentous and startling events followed Mr. Weed's arrival in Paris, where he was met by John Bigelow, and Mr. Sanford then minister to Belgium. These gentlemen sought to impress the unwelcome truth upon his mind, which he was slow to believe, that the intelligent classes among the French sympathized with the Southern Confederacy. News came by a steamer, following within a few hours of the one on which

Mr. Weed was a passenger, of the capture of the Confederate commissioners. The excitement over it was intense. In England there was one universal and indignant war cry. After brief but earnest consultations with Minister Dayton, Archbishop Hughes, General Scott, and John Bigelow, Mr. Weed hastened to join Bishop McIlvaine in England. The whole story of Mr. Weed's European experiences, told by him in this library, the very walls of which seem saturated through and through with historic memories, would form a chapter such as history seldom produces. A few glimpses by the way must suffice, however, for our present purpose.

While in England, for some eight months, Mr. Weed generally breakfasted with Mr. Edward Ellice, one of the most influential commoners in England (sixty-two years in Parliament), who was in the practice of gathering daily about his table the lights of literature and statesmanship. Mr. George Moffat, a wealthy banker, to whom he carried a letter, hastened to give Mr. Weed a handsome dinner, in order to bring him into personal acquaintance with the members of Parliament, inviting twenty-one of the leaders in that august body to meet him. At the office of George Peabody Mr. Weed found a throng of merchants, both English and American, panic-stricken by the clamor of war. Mr. Peabody introduced Mr. Weed to Mr. McCullagh Torrens, who urged an immediate interview with Earl Russell. England, to all appearances, was hopelessly disgruntled. In his first interview with Charles Francis Adams, then minister to England, by whom he was cordially received, Mr. Weed was informed that war with America was seriously contemplated, and that orders had gone out to all the arsenals and dock-yards to prepare for immediate service. Mr. Weed dined on the evening after meeting Mr. Torrens with Sir J. Emerson Pennent, meeting there a large war party of gentlemen, among them Lord Clarence Paget, of the Admiralty. On returning from this dinner he found Mr. Torrens waiting for him at his hotel, who, having arranged with Earl Russell to receive him, directed that Mr. Weed should drive to Pembroke Lodge, Richmond Hill, the Earl's country seat, next morning at eleven o'clock. Mr. Weed found the minister quite alone, and was treated with extreme courtesy. But conversation was at first very much embarrassed by the Earl's evident belief that the Northerners were the aggressors in America. After noting the temper of his host, Mr. Weed used every endeavor to soften his resentment at the "insult to the English flag," as he called the capture of Mason and Slidell, and reminded him, in a gentle and cautious manner that, in the impressment of American seamen, our government submitted to more than six thousand violations of its flag, and waited three years before resorting to war—in 1812. The Earl listened with sur-



THE PARLOR OF THURLOW WEED'S HOME IN TWELFTH STREET.
[From a photograph by Miss Catharine Weed Barnes.]

prised interest; the facts had been sleeping in an unused corner of his memory for a long period, and springing suddenly into notice, seemed to encumber his speech. He became guarded in his utterances, and expressed a hope that the danger of a collision might be averted by the release of the Confederate Commissioners. Mr. Weed replied that English history taught that English noblemen had gone from the Tower to the block for offenses less grave than those which Mason and Slidell had committed against their government. The interview lasted over an hour and a half, when lunch was served, and "was more satisfactory in its conclusion than in its commencement." But the uneasiness of our commissioner was in no sense quieted.

Sir Henry Holland, the eminent physician of the Queen's household, visited Mr. Weed and his daughter at their hotel nearly every morning, and in his conversations with them made himself familiar with the American situation, and, as he went to Windsor Castle daily to see Prince Albert, who was then very ill, the opportunities he had for throwing oil upon the troubled waters were exceptional. Mr. Weed was kept advised by him of the sentiments of the royal pair; but family secrets confided to an attending physician were sacred, and thus Mr. Weed was obliged to keep the knowledge he received, that the Queen had modified the defiant words of the dispatch of her ministers to the United States government in such a way as to preserve peace between the two nations, within his own breast. Lord Arthur Kinnaird, whose wife was the niece of Lady Palmerston, was also warmly interested in the welfare of America, and treated Mr. Weed and his daughter in the most familiar and affectionate manner.

A gentleman writing from Europe at this period, said:

"I met Mr. Weed at a reception given by Mrs. Adams, at her residence in Portland Place, London, where nearly all the statesmen and nobility (Parliament being then in session) had gathered to pay their respects to the American Ambassador at the Court of St. James, Hon. Charles Francis Adams. It was a time of great depression for loyal Americans. Liverpool, Manchester, Birmingham, and London swarmed with boisterous and blustering secessionists, and the London *Standard* and *Herald*, in the interest and pay of Earl Grey, as well as the Confederates through Mason and Slidell, were scattering broadcast over the continent the wholesale fabrications and untruths of their reckless and unprincipled New York correspondent, 'Manhattan.' The enemies of America, including the Tory press of England, were exultant and flushed with recent apparent rebel victories. Under these depressing influences Mr. Weed met Earl Russell, Lord Palmerston, the Duke of Newcastle, Lord Formagh, and other distinguished noblemen, and they were soon clustering around him. His simple language, unostentatious manner, and courteous demeanor, seemed to rivet the attention of all. That his ideas were correct, and his arguments convincing, was evidenced by the nod of acquiescence and approbation of almost every statesman who heard his low, measured words, every one of which seemed a minie

ball without the rifle's report. A distinguished New York gentleman called me aside and asked if I could account for such marked attention as Mr. Weed was receiving, to the seeming neglect, as it were, even of the American minister, and he almost murmured at the monopoly Mr.



GLIMPSE OF DINING ROOM FROM THE PARLOR.

[From a photograph by Miss Catharine Weed Barnes.]

Weed was enjoying. I could only reply that it was the homage great men and great minds paid to genius, talent, purity and worth. I have no hesitation in saying—and my opportunities to know have been large—that no other person could have been selected from the United States who was so thoroughly educated to a perfect knowledge of the politics, condition, and resources of the North, as well as the cause, the object, and aim of the Southern rebellion, and its certain disastrous fate and utter ruin of the Southern states. Mr. Weed portrayed the situation in his own masterly way, much to

the satisfaction of Mr. Adams (as I learned at the embassy next day), who had given the entertainment in order that Mr. Weed might interchange sentiments with British statesmen and impress upon their minds solid truths. Time has justified all the predictions and promises made by Mr. Weed on that memorable evening."

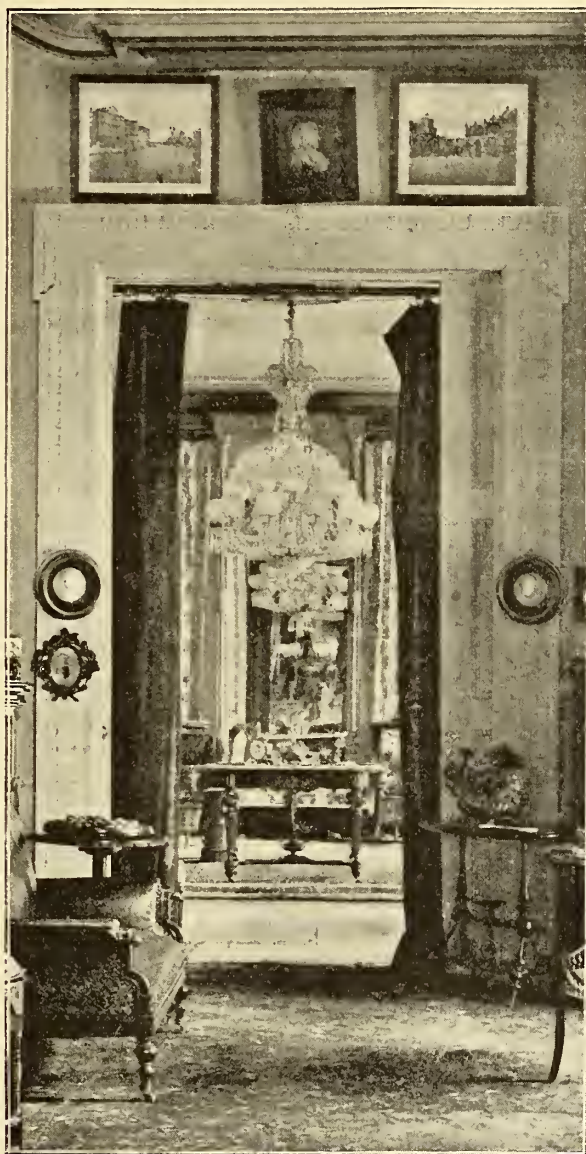
A reception was also given by Lord and Lady Kinnaird at their London residence, in order that Bishop McIlvaine and Mr. Weed might converse with gentlemen prominent in English politics and society on the civil war in America, believing that there was a general lack of information respecting the causes of the war. Mr. Weed prophesied with much emphasis on that occasion that "emancipation must inevitably follow the success of the Union arms."

It was in the library of his Twelfth Street home that Mr. Weed gave the writer a graphic account of his experiences in France, which, recorded at the moment in a note-book, is all the more interesting because in his own exact words. He said: "On the 15th of December I received a dispatch from Mr. Dayton, our minister to France, asking me to come immediately to Paris. We left London that evening at half-past eight o'clock, and at half-past seven next morning had reached our destination, and I breakfasted with Archbishop Hughes. Proceeding to the legation, we found Mr. Dayton and Mr. Bigelow in anxious consultation about the Emperor's prospective New Year's address before the Corps Legislatif, in which it was reported that he would refer to our blockade as a violation of the laws of nations and a just cause of war. This, of course, occasioned great solicitude. Some days previously Archbishop Hughes and General Scott had seen the Emperor, who, while cordial in his reception of them, was reticent in relation to affairs with our country. Learning that I had a letter from Secretary Seward to Prince Napoleon, it was deemed important that I should see him immediately. I repaired to the residence of the prince (a cousin of the Emperor), who confirmed the report in relation to the Emperor's speech, expressing his regret that he could do nothing for us. The prince, who had recently returned from America, was so outspoken against rebellion and in favor of the Union that he had no influence at court. 'The Emperor,' he said, 'was greatly exasperated, and, even if he failed to obtain the co-operation of England, would make our blockade an occasion for war.' On my return, passing through the Rue Scribe, I remembered that a letter, handed to me by a friend, Mr. Anthony J. Hill, as we were leaving the Astor House, bore the address of this street. Mr. Hill, in handing it to me, remarked that I had better deliver it as soon as I arrived in Paris. The necessity of going immediately to London prevented its delivery then. I therefore decided to do so now. I drove to

my hotel, procured the letter, and called on M. Alphonse Loubat, to whom it was addressed. He received me with great cordiality, remarking that my coming was timely, and that no time should be lost in seeing the Emperor. I said that unfortunately we were unable to obtain an audience of the Emperor until after New Year's Day, which would be too late. To this M. Loubat replied that the Emperor would come from his chateau—a few miles out of Paris—the next morning, immediately after which he would arrange an interview. Returning to the legation, I informed our friends that Prince Napoleon could do nothing for us, but that M. Loubat (to whom I had a letter) would take me to the Tuileries early the next day. They were incredulous, presuming no one private citizen had any such power: they thought he must have over-estimated his own importance. But he had inspired me with confidence, and as nothing else could be done we separated.

At nine o'clock the next morning M. Loubat called at my hotel, saying

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GLIMPSE OF THE PARLORS FROM THE DINING-ROOM.

[From a photograph by Miss Catharine Weed Barnes.]

that, on reflection, he thought I had better first see Count de Morny, brother of the Emperor. He then drove with me to the palatial residence of the Count. In the ante-room several distinguished persons were awaiting an audience. The usher who received M. Loubat's card returned immediately, showing us into the Count's presence, to whom I was introduced. M. Loubat, remarking that the business on which I had called was of immediate and pressing importance, at once took his leave. For twenty minutes my interview was quite as embarrassing and seemed as hopeless as that with Earl Russell a few days before. 'Our government,' the Count said, 'is a paternal one. When the Emperor is unable to find employment for his subjects, it is incumbent on him to supply them with bread. Your blockade deprives France of its supply of cotton—a product essential to all the industries of France—and cannot be endured.' I urged the precedents for blockades by other governments. He replied: 'The laws and usages of war, largely unwritten, have been modified by time and circumstances;' and insisted that we in our civil war were not at liberty to inflict serious injury upon other nations. He said the blockade was not the only wrong from which France was suffering. 'Your government has destroyed the harbor of Charleston, from which the commerce of the world is suffering serious embarrassment and loss. For that wrong there is neither justification nor excuse.' I told him that instead of destroying the harbor of Charleston, we had simply obstructed it, and that the rocks that had been placed there could be removed when the emergency no longer existed. This, the Count said, was no answer to his point, inasmuch as the navigation of the harbor had been, and for the time being was, practically destroyed.' I remarked that there were precedents for our course even in relation to Charleston harbor.

'I am aware,' said the Count, 'that you rely on the obstructions in the River Scheldt as a precedent; but the Scheldt was a river of mere local commerce, and has no significance as a precedent for the destruction of one of the most important commercial harbors in the world.' 'It is not the Scheldt that I rely on as a precedent,' I replied with emphasis. 'What other precedent have you to rely on?' asked the Count. 'You remember,' I ventured to say, 'that in one of your early wars with England, a war which *assumed proportions inconsistent with the interests of France*, negotiations for peace were opened, but England, having your government at disadvantage, demanded concessions that the French could not accept, and the negotiations were broken off. Subsequently, the war proving still more disastrous, negotiations were resumed, and a treaty of peace only reached when France consented to the destruction of the second best harbor in her kingdom.'

The Count was evidently surprised and embarrassed ; after a short pause I added : ' In that war with England, Holland was an ally of France, and two years after the peace, Holland called upon England to insist on the fulfillment of the treaty, which called not only for the destruction of the harbor of Dunkirk, but for the demolition of its fortifications—the latter part of the requirement not having been complied with—whereupon the fortifications were demolished: so that, as the world knows, Dunkirk, with its harbor and fortifications, has been a ruin for more than a century and a half.' As the Count still seemed perplexed, and was not able to remember to what treaty I referred, I told him it was the treaty of Utrecht, in 1713. He rang his bell, and presuming he was going to send for the treaty, I remarked that I had a copy with me, and handed it to him, calling his attention to the second paragraph, as follows :

' The most Christian King shall take care that all the fortifications of the city of Dunkirk be razed, that the harbor be filled up, and that the sluices or moles which serve to cleanse the harbor be leveled, and that at the said King's own expense, within the space of five months after the conditions of peace are concluded and signed ; that is to say, that the fortifications towards the sea within the space of two months, and those towards the land, together with the said banks, within three months ; on this express condition, also, that the said fortifications, harbors, moles or sluices *be never repaired again*. All which, however, shall not be begun to be *ruined* till after that everything is put into his Christian Majesty's hands which is to be given him in stead thereof, or as an equivalent.'

The Count read these lines carefully and thoughtfully twice, and then returned me the paper, saying that he was to go with the minister of Foreign Affairs on Saturday evening to the Tuileries, where the Emperor would read his forthcoming speech to them. I thanked the Count for his courtesy, and on rising to leave, he told me that if I deemed it important to see him again, my own personal card would be sufficient to admit me."

The Emperor's annual address, when delivered, made no mention of the blockade, and the commissioners were thus assured that the threatened war with France was averted.

As Mr. Weed was in Europe in a semi-official capacity he devoted his time largely to personal interviews with prominent personages, in which he threw much needed light upon the actual situation in this country, and conquered the prevailing distrust among Europeans of the policy of our government. His labors bore visible fruit, as the world knows, in the marked change of sentiment in both England and France.

M. Loubat came to New York afterward, where he owned large possessions, and for the part he had taken received the thanks of the government. He was a man of great wealth, who had built some of the first and

most important railroads in France, which explains his intimacy and influence with the Emperor and his brother. Mr. Hill, who gave the letter to Mr. Weed, was a West India planter, with New York interests in a great sugar house, and his partner, who wrote the letter which he handed to Mr. Weed, was M. Loubat's brother-in-law.

All the apartments in Mr. Weed's home are gems of comfort. The works of art which adorn the walls of the elegant parlors were nearly all gifts to the master of the mansion from one source and another; some few he brought from Europe. Souvenirs of massive silver are also preserved by his daughter. A beautiful silver salver, solid and massive, some thirty or thirty-five inches in diameter, was presented to him by the merchants of New York on one occasion. The handsome gold chain which he wore at the time his portrait was made (the frontispiece to this number of the Magazine) was a gift from the Honorable Hamilton Fish when he retired from the governorship of the state of New York, in 1851. Books are everywhere, from the entrance hall to the attic; ingenious devices in the way of book-shelves are built between windows and doors, in corners, and wherever there is a few feet of unoccupied space. This home was for Mr. Weed a home of peace, all the enmities that gave animation to party conflicts having lost their sharp edges. He could here welcome those with whom he once had had the hottest differences; and from under this roof emanated acts of generosity to partisan opponents that can never be forgotten. No other man ever occupied so unique and extraordinary a position in American affairs. In his will, Mr. Weed gave his New York house and its appointments, furniture, silver, paintings, books, papers, etc., in fee simple absolute to his daughter, Miss Harriet Weed, who still makes it her residence.

Martha J Lamb

MUTUAL LIFE INSURANCE COMPANY OF NEW YORK.

RICHARD A. McCURDY, President.

STATEMENT FOR THE YEAR ENDING DECEMBER 31, 1886.

ASSETS, - - - - - \$114,181,963.24.

Insurance and Annuity Account.

	No.	Amount.		No.	Amount.
Policies and Annuities in force January 1st, 1886.....	120,952	\$368,981,441 36	Policies and Annuities in force, January 1st, 1887.....	129,927	\$393,809,202 88
Risks Assumed.....	18,673	56,832,718 92	Risks Terminated.....	9,698	32,004,957 40
	139,625	\$425,814,160 28		139,625	\$425,814,160 28

Dr. Revenue Account. Cr.

To Balance from last account.....	\$99,865,644 11	By paid to Policyholders:	
Premiums.....	15,634,720 66	Endowments and Purchased Insurance.....	\$4,908,720 61
Interest and Rents.....	5,502,456 01	Dividends and Annuities.....	2,727,454 13
		Deceased Lives.....	5,492,920 00
			\$13,129,103 74
		By Other Disbursements:	
		Commissions and Commutations.....	\$1,732,632 83
		Taxes.....	277,169 85
		Expenses.....	1,091,613 91
			3,101,416 59
		By Premiums on Stocks and Bonds Purchased....	52,566 14
		Balance to new account.....	104,719,734 31
	\$121,002,820 78		\$121,002,820 78

Dr. Balance Sheet. Cr.

To Reserve for policies in force and for risks terminated.....	\$108,460,120 25	By Bonds secured by Mortgages on Real Estate.....	\$50,118,949 66
Premiums received in advance.....	78,274 84	United States and other Bonds.....	42,071,641 00
Surplus at four per cent.....	5,643,568 15	Loans on Collaterals.....	6,172,917 25
		Real Estate.....	10,591,286 32
		Cash in Banks and Trust Companies at interest,	2,306,203 08
		Interest accrued.....	1,166,870 65
		Premiums deferred and in transit.....	1,565,117 28
		Sundries.....	188,978 00
	\$114,181,963 24		\$114,181,963 24

I have carefully examined the foregoing statement and find the same to be correct.

From the Surplus above stated a dividend will be apportioned as usual.

A. N. WATERHOUSE,
Auditor.

ROBT. A. GRANNISS, Vice-President.

ISAAC F. LLOYD, 2d Vice-President.

WILLIAM J. EASTON, Secretary.

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